

Claims 1-19: cancel.

20. (currently amended) A security tag deactivation apparatus for a self-checkout system, said self-checkout system comprising product code input means for inputting identification information of a product, a first conveyor for transporting a product whose code has been input into said system, a security zone ~~tunnel~~ positioned adjacent a ~~first end of said conveyor, wherein said tunnel includes characteristic measuring means for measuring a characteristic of said product~~, said apparatus comprising:
 - a first zone for detecting and/or deactivating a security tag, said first zone extending from the ~~an upper portion of said security zone~~ ~~tunnel~~ down to said conveyor; and
 - a second zone for detecting and/or deactivating a ~~magnetic~~ security tag, said second zone ~~positioned adjacent a second end of said conveyor and extending up from a lower portion of said security zone out from said conveyor in an upward direction.~~
21. (currently amended) The security tag deactivation apparatus according to claim 20, further comprising a third zone for detecting a ~~magnetic~~ security tag, said third zone provided adjacent said second zone in a conveyor transporting direction.
22. (original) The security tag deactivation apparatus according to claim 20, wherein a strength of at least one of said first and said second zones may be varied.
23. (original) The security tag deactivation apparatus according to claim 20, wherein said first and said second zones overlap.
24. (currently amended) The security tag deactivation device according to claim 20, wherein a substantial portion of at least one of said first and said second zones lie within the ~~a~~ security zone ~~positioned on said conveyor.~~
25. (original) The security tag deactivation apparatus according to claim 20, wherein said first zone is established by a first deactivator/detector device.

26. (original) The security tag deactivation apparatus according to claim 20, wherein said second zone is established by a second deactivator/detector device.
27. (original) The security tag deactivation apparatus according to claim 21, wherein said third zone is established by a detector device.
28. (original) The security tag deactivation apparatus according to claim 27, wherein a strength of said detector may be varied.
29. (currently amended) A method for deactivating a security tag included on an item comprising:

~~receiving placing~~ an item having a security tag attached thereto on a conveyor for transporting said item a predetermined distance, said conveyor transporting said item through a ~~security zone tunnel~~;

providing a first zone for detecting and/or deactivating said tag, said first zone extending down from an upper portion of said ~~security zone tunnel~~ to said conveyor; and

providing a second zone for detecting and/or deactivating said tag, said second zone extending up from ~~a lower portion of said security zone said conveyor~~.

30. (original) The method according to claim 29, said method further comprising providing a security tag detection zone in a downstream conveyor direction from said second zone.
31. (original) The method according to claim 29, said method further comprising varying a strength of at least one of said first and said second zones.
32. (original) The method according to claim 29, said method further comprising overlapping said first and said second zones.
33. (original) The method according to claim 29, said method further comprising varying a strength of said security tag detection zone.
34. (currently amended) A method for deactivating a security tag included on an item

comprising:

~~receiving placing~~ an article having an active security tag attached thereto ~~on onto~~ a conveyor;

providing a first deactivation zone established by a first detector/deactivator extending from a first distance down toward said conveyor a second distance; and

providing a second deactivation zone established by a second detector/deactivator extending up from said conveyor a third distance, wherein

said second distance is positioned above said third distance,

a strength of at least one of said first and said second deactivation zones is varied;

providing a security tag detection zone established by a variable strength security tag detector provided adjacent said second deactivation zone; and

varying a strength of said security tag detection zone.

35. (currently amended) A method for deactivating a security tag attached to an item in a self-checkout system comprising:

identifying an item having a security tag attached thereto for purchase;

~~receiving placing~~ said item on a checkout surface;

providing a first deactivation zone extending from a first distance toward said checkout surface to a second distance; and

providing a second deactivation zone extending up from said checkout surface a third distance from said checkout surface, ~~wherein said third distance is positioned below said second distance~~.

36. (currently amended) A method for deactivating a security tag included on an item in a self-checkout system comprising:

identifying an item having a security tag attached thereto for purchase;

~~receiving placing~~ an article having an active security tag attached thereto ~~on onto~~ a conveyor;

providing a first deactivation zone established by a first deactivator extending from a first distance down toward said conveyor a second distance; and

providing a second deactivation zone established by a second deactivator extending up a third distance above said checkout surface and overlapping said first deactivation zone, wherein

said third distance is positioned above said second distance,

said third distance is positioned between said surface and said first distance,

a strength of at least one of said first and said second deactivation zones may be varied;

providing a security tag detection zone established by a variable strength security tag detector, said detection zone provided adjacent said second deactivation zone in a conveyor transporting direction; and

a strength of said security tag detection zone may be varied.

37. (currently amended) A self-checkout system for performing a purchasing transaction comprising:

display means for displaying details associated with a purchasing transaction;

input means for inputting an ~~a first~~ identification of an article and for inputting an ~~a second~~ identification of a coupon;

receiving means for receiving said coupon after said coupon ~~second~~ identification

is input, said receiving means having a sensor for detecting when said coupon has been received;

memory means for storage of a database, said database comprising product ~~first~~ identification data, ~~coupon second~~ identification data, pricing data associated with said ~~product first~~ identification data, credit data associated with said ~~coupon second~~ identification data, and association data; and

controller means for controlling operation of said system.

38. (currently amended) A self-checkout system for performing a purchasing transaction comprising:

a display for displaying details associated with a purchasing transaction;

a UPC scanner for inputting a first UPC code for an article and for inputting a second UPC code ~~for or~~ a coupon;

a coupon compartment for receiving said coupon after said second ~~UPC code identification~~ is input, said compartment having a sensor for detecting when said coupon has been received;

a memory for storage of a database, said database comprising first UPC code data, second UPC code data, pricing data associated with said first ~~UPC code identification~~ data, credit data associated with said second UPC code data, and association data comprising information for associating said coupon with said purchasing transaction; and

a controller for controlling operation of said system.

39. (currently amended) A method of conducting a purchasing transaction with a customer in a self-checkout apparatus, said method comprising:

~~receiving an inputting a first~~ identification of an article for purchase;

displaying a price associated with said first identification on a display;

receiving an inputting a second identification for a coupon for credit;

validating said coupon, wherein when said coupon is positively validated a credit associated with said coupon is applied against a total of said purchasing transaction, and wherein when said coupon is negatively validated, an error message is displayed indicating that said coupon cannot be used;

receiving said coupon in a coupon receiving area comprising a compartment having an opening with an adjacent sensor for receiving and storing said coupon after said coupon has been positively validated, wherein when said coupon is not received in said coupon receiving area within a predetermined period of time, said credit is withdrawn against said purchasing transaction.

40. (new) A self-checkout system comprising:

input means for receiving input of a product price and/or identification;

a display screen;

a bagging area; and

a first zone for detecting and/or deactivating a security tag of an item for purchase.

41. (new) The self-checkout system according to claim 40, wherein the self-checkout system further comprises a conveyor for transporting items to a bagging area, and wherein the first zone is positioned adjacent the conveyor.
42. (new) The self-checkout system according to claim 41, wherein the self-checkout system further comprises a security zone positioned adjacent the conveyor, and wherein the first zone extends from an upper portion of the security zone downward.
43. (new) The self-checkout system according to claim 42, further comprising a second zone for detecting and/or deactivating a security tag, wherein the second zone extends upward

from a lower portion of the security zone.

44. (new) The self-checkout system according to claim 43, further comprising a third zone for detecting and/or deactivating a security tag, wherein the third zone is positioned adjacent the second zone in a conveyor transporting direction.
45. (new) The self-checkout system according to claim 40, wherein a strength of the first zone may be varied.
46. (new) The self-checkout system according to claim 43, wherein the first zone and the second zone overlap.
47. (new) The self-checkout system according to claim 40, wherein said first zone is established by a first deactivator/detector device.
48. (new) The self-checkout system according to claim 43, wherein said second zone is established by a second deactivator/detector device.
49. (new) The self-checkout system according to claim 44, wherein said third zone is established by a detector device.
50. (new) A method for deactivating a security tag included on an item on a self-checkout system, the method comprising:
 - receiving an item for purchase at a self-checkout system, wherein the item includes a security tag;
 - directing the item adjacent a first zone, the first zone for detecting and/or deactivating the tag; and
 - detecting and/or deactivating the security tag.

51. (new) The method according to claim 50, further comprising directing the item adjacent a second zone, the second zone for detecting and/or deactivating the tag.

52. (new) The method according to claim 50, further comprising varying a strength of the first zone.
53. (new) The method according to claim 51, further comprising varying a strength of the first zone and/or second zone.
54. (new) The method according to claim 51, wherein the first zone and the second zone overlap.
54. (new) The method according to claim 50, further comprising directing the item adjacent a third zone for detecting a security tag.
55. (new) The method according to claim 51, further comprising directing the item adjacent a third zone for detecting a security tag.
56. (new) The method according to claim 50, wherein the first zone is provided adjacent a conveyor of the self-checkout system.
57. (new) The method according to claim 51, wherein the first zone and the second zone are provided adjacent a conveyor of the self-checkout system.